VAVAHOST

The Complete WordPress Website Launch Checklist

From choosing hosting to going live with confidence

A practical, beginner-friendly checklist for launching a professional WordPress website.

Includes hosting, security, performance, SEO, backups, testing, and post-launch maintenance.

Created by VavaHost

https://vavahost.com

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How to Use This Checklist

Use this guide before, during, and after your WordPress launch. Check each item only after you verify it yourself. For team projects, assign an owner and deadline to every unfinished task.

Phase	Main Focus	Status
Planning	Domain, goals, audience, content	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete
Hosting	Performance, SSL, backups, email	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete
WordPress Setup	Core settings, theme, plugins	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete
Security	Accounts, updates, firewall, recovery	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete
Performance	Caching, images, database, mobile	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete
SEO & Analytics	Indexing, metadata, sitemap, tracking	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete
Pre-Launch QA	Forms, links, checkout, devices	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete
Post-Launch	Monitoring, backups, updates, growth	☐ Not started ☐ In progress ☐ Complete

Recommended hosting baseline: NVMe storage, SSL, automated backups, a current PHP version, malware protection, server-side caching, and responsive support.

1. Define the Website Before You Build

- [ ] **Clarify the primary goal**

  Decide whether the website must generate leads, sell products, publish content, showcase a portfolio, book appointments, or support customers.

- [ ] **Identify the target audience**

  Write one sentence describing the ideal visitor, their problem, and the action you want them to take.

- [ ] **Choose one primary conversion**

  Examples: purchase, contact form submission, free-trial signup, booking, newsletter subscription, or account creation.

- [ ] **Map the essential pages**

  Typical launch set: Home, About, Services or Products, Pricing, Blog, Contact, Privacy Policy, Terms, and a custom 404 page.

- [ ] **Prepare launch-ready content**

  Finalize headlines, body copy, calls to action, images, logos, testimonials, FAQs, legal text, and contact details.

2. Domain and Hosting Setup

- [ ] **Register the correct domain**

  Prefer a short, memorable, easy-to-spell domain. Avoid unnecessary hyphens, confusing numbers, and trademark risks.

- [ ] **Verify domain ownership and DNS**

  Confirm the domain is in your account and DNS records point to the correct hosting service.

- [ ] **Choose a suitable hosting plan**

  Match storage, traffic, email, database, backup, and staging needs to the website. Leave

room for growth.

- [ ] **Enable SSL before publishing**

  The final website should load over HTTPS without mixed-content warnings.

- [ ] **Create professional email addresses**

  Use addresses such as hello@yourdomain.com, support@yourdomain.com, or billing@yourdomain.com.

- [ ] **Confirm backup and restore options**

  Know how often backups run, how long they are retained, and how to restore the site quickly.

Hosting note

A dependable hosting environment should make SSL, backups, WordPress installation, security, and support easy to manage. Explore hosting options at VavaHost.com

3. Install and Configure WordPress

- [ ] **Install WordPress on the final domain**

  Avoid launching from a temporary URL unless you have a clear migration plan.

- [ ] **Set the site title and tagline**

  Use clear brand wording. Remove default text such as “Just another WordPress site.”

- [ ] **Set timezone, language, and date format**

  Use the timezone where the business operates or where content schedules are managed.

- [ ] **Configure clean permalinks**

  For most sites, the “Post name” structure is clear and SEO-friendly.

- [ ] **Delete default content**

  Remove the sample post, sample page, unused comments, and unnecessary themes or plugins.

- [ ] **Create an administrator recovery path**

  Use a monitored email address and securely store recovery codes or credentials.

4. Theme, Design, and User Experience

- [ ] **Use a lightweight, maintained theme**

  Choose a responsive theme with recent updates, good documentation, and compatibility with your editor and plugins.

- [ ] **Apply consistent branding**

  Use a defined logo, color palette, typography system, button style, and image treatment.

- [ ] **Design for mobile first**

  Check navigation, tap targets, forms, tables, pricing cards, and popups on a real phone.

- [ ] **Make navigation predictable**

  Keep labels simple. Important pages should be reachable within a few clicks.

- [ ] **Use clear calls to action**

  Every key page should guide visitors toward one meaningful next step.

- [ ] **Check accessibility basics**

  Use sufficient contrast, descriptive link text, visible focus states, form labels, keyboard navigation, and image alt text.

5. Plugins and Essential Functionality

- [ ] **Install only necessary plugins**

  Every plugin adds maintenance and potential risk. Remove anything unused or duplicated.

- [ ] **Use a reliable SEO plugin**

  Configure titles, descriptions, canonical URLs, social sharing metadata, and XML sitemaps.

- [ ] **Add caching and performance tools**

  Use one clear caching strategy and avoid stacking multiple plugins that do the same job.

- [ ] **Add security and login protection**

  Use rate limiting, two-factor authentication where possible, malware scanning, and login alerts.

- [ ] **Configure backups**

  Back up both files and the database. Test at least one restore before launch.

- [ ] **Set up forms and email delivery**

  Use SMTP or a dependable transactional email service, then test every form destination.

6. Security Checklist

- [ ] **Use unique, strong passwords**

  Never reuse hosting, WordPress, email, database, or registrar passwords.

- [ ] **Enable two-factor authentication**

  Prioritize the registrar, hosting account, administrator accounts, and business email.

- [ ] **Apply least-privilege access**

  Give editors, authors, customers, and contractors only the permissions they need.

- [ ] **Update WordPress, themes, and plugins**

  Launch with supported versions and remove abandoned software.

- [ ] **Protect the login area**

  Limit repeated attempts, monitor suspicious activity, and avoid sharing administrator accounts.

- [ ] **Create an incident recovery plan**

  Document who can access the domain, hosting, backups, email, analytics, and payment systems.

7. Performance and Core Web Readiness

- [ ] **Compress and resize images**

  Upload images close to their displayed dimensions and use modern formats where practical.

- [ ] **Enable browser and page caching**

  Confirm repeat visits are faster and logged-in functionality still works correctly.

- [ ] **Minimize unnecessary scripts**

  Remove unused widgets, trackers, animations, fonts, and third-party embeds.

- [ ] **Use a content delivery network when useful**

  A CDN can reduce latency and offload static assets for visitors in multiple regions.

- [ ] **Test important pages**

  Measure the Home, Pricing, Blog, Product, Checkout, and Contact pages separately.

- [ ] **Verify mobile performance**

  A desktop score alone is not enough. Test on a slower connection and mid-range device.

8. SEO, Analytics, and Discoverability

- [ ] **Write a unique title and meta description**

  Every important page should accurately describe its purpose and target search intent.

- [ ] **Use one clear H1 per page**

  Structure supporting sections with logical H2 and H3 headings.

- [ ] **Check indexability**

  Important pages should not have accidental noindex directives, blocked resources, or incorrect canonical tags.

- [ ] **Submit an XML sitemap**

  Add it to Google Search Console and Bing Webmaster Tools after launch.

- [ ] **Set up analytics and consent**

  Track meaningful events and respect applicable privacy and consent requirements.

- [ ] **Add internal links**

  Connect related pages with descriptive anchor text so visitors and search engines can discover them.

9. Pre-Launch Quality Assurance

- [ ] **Test every link and button**

  Check header, footer, menus, cards, social icons, downloads, and call-to-action buttons.

- [ ] **Submit every form**

  Confirm validation, success messages, spam protection, email delivery, and stored submissions.

- [ ] **Test purchase or booking flows**

  Complete the full process using a safe test method, including confirmation emails and account creation.

- [ ] **Check multiple browsers and devices**

  At minimum, test current Chrome, Safari, Firefox, and a mobile device.

- [ ] **Review legal and business details**

  Confirm company name, pricing, taxes, refund terms, privacy policy, contact information, and disclaimers.

- [ ] **Create a launch backup**

  Save a full restore point immediately before changing DNS or announcing the website.

10. Launch and Post-Launch Maintenance

- [ ] **Publish and monitor DNS**

  Allow time for DNS changes and verify both www and non-www versions resolve correctly.

- [ ] **Confirm HTTPS redirects**

  All HTTP URLs should redirect to the preferred HTTPS version without loops.

- [ ] **Watch uptime and errors**

Monitor availability, server errors, broken links, failed forms, and unusual traffic.

- [ ] **Review Search Console coverage**

  Check indexing, sitemap processing, mobile usability, and structured data after search engines crawl the site.

- [ ] **Schedule updates and backups**

  Create a recurring maintenance routine instead of waiting for problems.

- [ ] **Improve based on real behavior**

  Use analytics, support questions, heatmaps, and conversion data to prioritize improvements.

Launch Day: Final 20-Minute Check

☐ 01	Homepage loads correctly on desktop and mobile.
☐ 02	HTTPS is active and no mixed-content warning appears.
☐ 03	Primary call-to-action works from the homepage.
☐ 04	Contact form delivers to the correct inbox.
☐ 05	Navigation and footer links are correct.
☐ 06	Pricing, taxes, and renewal terms are accurate.
☐ 07	Checkout or booking flow completes successfully.
☐ 08	Analytics records a test visit and key event.
☐ 09	Robots.txt and sitemap are accessible.
☐ 10	Important pages are indexable.
☐ 11	Backup completed immediately before launch.
☐ 12	Administrator and hosting credentials are secured.
☐ 13	Uptime monitoring is active.
☐ 14	404 page works and helps visitors recover.
☐ 15	Business email can send and receive.
☐ 16	Social preview image and metadata display correctly.

☐ **17**	Cookie or consent controls work where required.
☐ **18**	No placeholder content or broken images remain.
☐ **19**	Launch announcement links to the correct domain.
☐ **20**	One person is responsible for post-launch monitoring.

Simple Maintenance Schedule

Frequency	Tasks	Owner / Date
Daily	Uptime, security alerts, failed orders or forms, critical errors	_____
Weekly	Backups, plugin/theme updates, form tests, spam review	_____
Monthly	Performance tests, broken links, analytics review, user cleanup	_____
Quarterly	Restore test, content audit, conversion review, access review	_____
Yearly	Domain renewal, policy review, disaster-recovery review, redesign assessment	_____

Ready to launch?

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